

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 INR-07 L-03 ACDA-07
NSAE-00 PA-01 SS-15 PRS-01 SP-02 USIA-06 TRSE-00
SAJ-01 NSC-05 AID-05 IGA-02 MC-02 EB-08 /082 W
-----022114 118174 /67

R 021735Z MAR 77
FM USMISSION NATO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1961
SECDEF WASHDC
INFO ALL NATO CAPITALS 6864
CINCLANT
USCINCEUR
USDOCOSOUTH
USLOSACLANT
USNMR SHAPE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 USNATO 1137

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MASS, MPOL, NATO, PO
SUBJECT: FRG CONTRIBUTION TO PORTUGUESE NATO BRIGADE

SUMMARY: ACCORDING TO FRG DEFENSE ADVISOR, FRG FEDERAL SECURITY COUNCIL WILL MEET MARCH 9 TO CONSIDER FRG CONTRIBUTION TO THE PORTUGUESE NATO BRIGADE. FRG ARMY'S PRESENT PLAN IS TO PROVIDE 17 M48A2 MAIN BATTLE TANKS AND 18 105 MM FIELD HOWITZERS, TOGETHER WITH TRAINING. ADDITIONAL AID WILL DEPEND ON THE EXTENT OF EASSISTANCE GIVEN TO PORTUGAL BY OTHER ALLIES. FRG DESIRES NATO AD HOC COMMITTEE MEETING AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AFTER MARCH 9 TO CONFIRM THE POLITICAL WILLINGENESS OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO GRANT THIS AID. NOTABLY, THE FRG DOES NOT REPEAT NOT CLOSE THE DOOR ON THE POSSIBILITY OF ITS FUNDING UPGRADE OF M48A2 TANKS TO M48A5; HOWEVER, THE FRG CONTINUES TO BELIEVE THAT UPGRADED TANKS ARE NOT IN PORTUGAL'S BEST INTERESTS. SCHUENEMANN ALSO POSED SEVERAL CONFIDENTIAL

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TECHNICAL QUESTIONS, TO WHICH WE REQUIRE ANSWERS. ACTION REQUESTED: ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS, PARA 3, BY MARCH 7. END SUMMARY.

1. FRG DEFENSE ADVISOR BGEN SCHUENEMANN CALLED ON DEPUTY DEFENSE ADVISOR MARCH 1, ON INSTRUCTIONS, TO DELIVER ANOTE DESCRIBING PROSPECTIVE FRG ASSISTANCE FOR PORTUGAL'S NATO BRIGADE. TEXT FOLLOWS IN PARAGRAPH 4 BELOW. THE NOTE CONFIRMS FRG WILLINGENESS TO PROVIDE 17 M48A2 TANKS AND 18 105 MM FIELD HOWITZERS, AS WELL AS NECESSARY TRAINING. THE NOTE

ALSO SAYS, AS SCHUENEMANN EMPHASIZED VERBALLY, THAT THE EXTENT OF FOLLOW-ON FRG AID TO PORTUGAL DEPENDS ON THE EXTENT OF AID GRANTED BY OTHER PARTNERS. PROVIDED THE FEDERAL SECURITY COUNCIL IN FACT MEETS ON THIS SUBJECT ON MARCH 9, THE FRG FAVORS A MEETING OF NATO'S AD HOC GROUP ON MILITARY ASSISTANCE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE THEREAFTER TO DISCUSS "SUPPLY OF THE MATERIAL ADDITIONALLY DESIRED BY PORTUGAL BUT NOT PROVIDED BY THE US OR GERMANY."

2. EXPANDING ON THE SUBJECT OF MAIN BATTLE TANKS, SCHUENEMANN NOTED THAT THEFRG PRESENTLY HAS 1300 M48A2 TANKS ON ACTIVE DUTY IN THE BUNDESWEHR. FOLLOWING TRANSITION OF ACTIVE-DUTY UNITS TO LEOPARD, 600 TO 700 OF THESE WILL BE KEPT IN TERRITORIAL UNITS AND IN SOME ACTIVE-DUTY ANTI-TANK UNITS AS UPGUNNED (TO 105 MM) BUT NOT DIESELIZED MAIN BATTLE TANKS. SCHUENEMANN THOUGH THAT ESTIMATED COSTS FOR UPGRADING OF M48A2 TANKS TO A5 STATUS FOR PORTUGAL COULD NOT BE JUSTIFIED IN TERMS OF DESIRABLE BRIGADE MILITARY CAPABILITIES, AND THAT MONEY SPENT ON UPGRADING THE TANKS MIGHT BE BETTER SPENT ELSEWHERE. IN RESPONSE TO DEP/DEFAD'S POINT THAT THIS QUESTION COULD BE BEST ANSWERED BY THE PORTUGUESE THEMSELVES, SCHUENEMANN AGREED AND NOTED THAT THE FINANCAIL MECHANISM FOR PORTUGUESE AID WHICH THE ARMY IS SEEKING WOULD BE SIMILAR TO THAT IN USE IN THE CASE OF GREECE AND TURKEY: THE TOTAL AMONT IS SUBJECT TO APPROVAL, BUT NEED NOT SPECIFY IN EXACT DETAIL HOW THE MONEY IS TO BE SPENT. CONFIDENTIAL

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NOTING THE POLITICAL BASIS OF THE FORCE MODERNIZATION PROGRAM, DEP/DEFAD POINTED OUT THAT THE PORTUGUESE ARMY MAY PERCEIVE A CRUCIAL DIFFERENCE BETWEEN ACCEPTING M48A2 TANKS WITHOUT PROSPECTS FOR UPGRADING AND THE BUNDESWEHR CASE OF USING M48A2S NOW WITH CLEARLY FORESEEN PROSPECTS OF REPLACEMENT. SCHUENEMANN PROMISED TO CONVEY THESE POINTS ONCE MORE TO HIS AUTHORITIES, HINTING THAT THERE MIGHT BE SUFFICIENT FLEXIBILITY IN THE APPROVED GERMAN PROGRAM TO PAY FOR TANK UPGRADING IF IT TURNS OUT THAT IT IS THIS THAT THE PORTUGUESE WANT.

3. SCHUENEMANN POSED THE FOLLOWING TECHNICAL QUESTIONS FROM BONN, ASKING FOR ANSWERS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE:

A. WHEN THE US DELIVERS ITS EQUIPMENT UNDER THIS PROGRAM, WHAT KIND OF AGREEMENT WILL COVER THE TRANSFER: A STRICTLY BILATERAL AGREEMENT OR ONE IN THE FRAMEWORK OF NATO? (HE SAID THAT BONN HAD NO PREFERENCE IN THIS REGARD, AND WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY FOLLOW OUR LEAD.)

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B. IF A TRANSFER AGREEMENT WERE TO BE BILATERAL,
WOULD ANY MENTION BE MADE OF NATO ASPECTS OF THE TRANSFER?
SHOULD NATO BE A SIGNATORY TO THE AGREEMENT? IF SO, HOW?
SPECIFICALLY, HOW COULD CUSTOMARY PRECAUTIONS ON FURTHER
TRANSFER OF EQUIPMENT BE HANDLED IN A NATO CONTEXT? (IN
THIS REGARD, SCHUENEMANN NOTED THAT FRG AGREEMENTS WITH
TURKEY AND GREECE REFER TO PARAGRAPH 3 OF THE NORTH ATLANTIC
TREATY.) COMMENT: WE BELIEVE CUSTOMARY FORMS FOR BILATERAL
TRANSFER WITH SOME SORT OF NATO PREAMBLE WOULD BE ADVISABLE.
END COMMENT.
WE PROMISED SCHUENEMANN SPEEDY ANSWERS TO HIS QUESTIONS.

4. BEGIN TEXT OF GERMAN NOTE:

GERMAN POSITION ON DEFENCE AID FOR PORTUGAL

THE GERMAN ARMY WILL PROBABLY BE ABLE TO SUPPLY 17 M-48-A-2
BATTLE TANKS AND 18 105MM FIELD HOWITZERS UNDER THE DEFENCE
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AID PROGRAMME FOR PORTUGAL. THE FEDERAL OFFICE FOR FOREIGN
AFFAIRS AND THE FEDERAL MINISTRY OF DEFENCE ARE TRYING TO
OBTAIN THE AGREEMENT OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT IN THE FEDERAL
SECURITY COUNCIL AND SUBSEQUENTLY OF THE RESPONSIBLE PARLIA-
MENTARY BODIES FOR THE SUPPLY OF THESE WEAPONS AND THE PRO-
VISION OF THE NECESSARY INSTRUCTORS. WHEN THIS AGREEMENT HAS
BEEN OBTAINED, THE ABOVE-MENTIONED WEAPONS, TOGETHER WITH THE
TRAINING AID PROVIDED BY THE FEDERAL ARMED FORCES, WILL
CONSTITUTE THE MAIN PART OF GERMAN DEFENCE AID TO PORTUGAL.
WHETHER AND TO WHAT EXTENT GERMANY WILL BE ABLE TO HELP
PORTUGAL BEYOND THIS AID, CANNOT YET BE SAID AT PRESENT,
BUT DEPENDS ALSO ON THE EXTENT OF THE AID GRANTED BY OTHER
PARTNERS.

THE NEXT POSSIBLE DATE FOR A MEETING OF THE FEDERAL SECURITY COUNCIL AT WHICH A GOVERNMENT DECISION COULD BE TAKEN ON THE PROVISION OF THE TANKS AND HOWITZERS AS WELL AS ON THE INSTRUCTORS REQUIRED WOULD BE 9 MARCH 1977. IT SEEMS EXPEDIENT TO US THAT THE AD HOC COMMITTEE SHOULD MEET ONLY AFTER THIS DATE BECAUSE WE MIGHT THEN BE ABLE TO CONFIRM THE POLITICAL WILLINGNESS OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO GRANT THE DESCRIBED AID WHICH WOULD, HOWEVER, STILL HAVE TO BE APPROVED BY THE BUNDESTAG. WE BELIEVE ON THE OTHER HAND, THAT AFTER THE DECISION OF THE GERMAN GOVERNMENT, EVEN WITHOUT THE BUNDESTAG'S APPROVAL, TIME WILL HAVE COME TO DISCUSS THE SUPPLY OF THE MATERIAL ADDITIONALLY DESIRED BY PORTUGAL, BUT NOT PROVIDED BY THE UNITED STATES OR GERMANY.
END TEXT.

5. ACTION REQUESTED: WASHINGTON ANSWERS TO FRG QUESTIONS DETAILED IN PARAGRAPH 3 ABOVE BY COB MARCH 7.
STRAUSZ-HUPE

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